



# Among the Canals of Amsterdam

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Cradle to cradle project in the Netherlands

This is the story of how I almost drank a 45 euro shot of Japanese whiskey, why I fell in love with Amsterdam, and the Dutch LEED AP - who, through his friendship and sincere passion for LEED - has touched my heart and validated for me yet again the transformational power that is LEED.

I'll start with the LEED AP.

He was one of my hosts during my recent trip to the Netherlands, and during that time, I felt truly privileged to witness his excitement at being a part of LEED and his aspirations for moving green building forward in his country. What particularly made my time with him stand out was that several months earlier, I had received an e-mail from him letting me know that his company had just fired 30% of its staff...and that his job was spared because he was the "LEED" guy. In his own words, had he not invested the time and energy in LEED several years ago, he would have been out on the street that day.

To have that kind of context and then see for myself how being a LEED AP has opened doors for him professionally and impacted not only him, his company and his clients, but also his lovely family, made me feel truly hopeful that this is what our work is all about - to inspire positive change and create opportunities for local leaders to emerge.

Now, for why I fell in love with Amsterdam - because it is the most beautiful, laid-back place I have ever seen. It has wonderful public transportation, human scale development, wonderful night life, romantic canals, AND it sells tulips (my favorite) by the thousands. What's not to like?

Finally, to the shots: After a long day of meetings, I invited my Dutch host for a drink at the hotel bar. Being currently on a whisky kick, I pointed out a Japanese whisky I had never tried and ordered two. Fifteen minutes later, the waitress returned, not with the two shots I was hoping she would offer (literally, on a silver platter) but the words - "Each shot costs 45 euros. Are you sure you still want it?"

I went for the Jameson instead.



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